

FEMA Region 3 Urges Post Storm Safety in Ida Response; Supports State Partners

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PHILADELPHIA –The remnants of Hurricane Ida moved through much of the Mid-Atlantic Wednesday bringing widespread heavy rainfall, tornadoes, and causing flooding for many rivers and streams. The damage in Ida’s wake, compounded by already saturated ground from other recent weather events, show it to be one of the more impactful tropical systems to ever hit Region 3.

Many rivers, streams and creeks are still well above flood stages. FEMA’s priorities are to support life-saving and life-sustaining actions. The agency continues to work with federal, state, local, tribal and non-governmental partners to support the needs of areas impacted by Ida.

“Throughout this storm, from preparation, through response and now recovery, FEMA Region 3 has been in constant contact with state emergency management directors and operational leaders to best support the needs of communities affected by Ida,” said FEMA Region 3 Regional Administrator MaryAnn Tierney. “Our state partners have been very proactive during the response, and we’re ready to assist.”

Nationally, more than 1,400 FEMA employees are deployed, including several FEMA Incident Management Assistance Teams that are supporting states in their response and recovery efforts.

Communities throughout Region 3 are conducting initial damage assessments. During this phase, local, county, and state emergency management agencies work with residents and businesses to assess and estimate the storm’s damage and to identify local and state resources needed to recover. FEMA is leaning forward to coordinate with and support states as swiftly as possible.

Individuals and businesses facing property damage due to Ida should consult their local or [state emergency management](#) agency for details on the process. Many municipalities and counties have online preliminary damage assessment forms to aid residents and businesses in getting the process started.

“Post-storm conditions pose nearly as many hazards as storms themselves,” Tierney



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added. “Pay attention to the instructions of local authorities, know your area’s flood risk, use precautions when cleaning up, and put safety first.”

FEMA urges anyone traveling in flood risk areas over the weekend to check for alerts and advisories before heading out and do not drive through flooded waters.

How to help survivors and communities impacted by Hurricane Ida

- Be patient. Recovery will take many months or more. People can help by donating to or volunteering with the voluntary or charitable organization of their choice, many of which are already in areas impacted by Ida and supporting survivors. Learn how to best [help](#) those in need.
- Do not self-deploy. Seeing images of disaster may compel you to head to the impacted area. Until a need has been identified and the community affected by Hurricane Ida has requested support, volunteers should not enter the area.
- Cash is the best donation. When people support voluntary organizations with financial contributions, it helps ensure a steady flow of important services to the people in need after a disaster. To find a reputable organization, visit the National Voluntary Organizations Active in a Disaster [Hurricane Ida](#) page.

Staying Safe After a Flood

- Pay attention to authorities for information and instructions. Return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Avoid driving except in emergencies. Emergency workers may be assisting people in flooded areas or cleaning up debris. You can help them by staying off the roads and out of the way. If you evacuated, do not return home until local officials say it is safe.
- Be aware of the risk of electrocution. Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water. Turn off the electricity to prevent electric shock if it is safe to do so.
- Avoid wading in floodwater, which can be contaminated and contain dangerous debris. Underground or downed power lines can also electrically charge the water.
- [Use a generator correctly and safely](#). Keep generators dry and position them outdoors and well away from any structure. Using a generator incorrectly can lead to dangerous situations, including carbon monoxide poisoning from engine exhaust. If you start to feel sick, dizzy, or weak while using a generator, get fresh air right away.
- [Be aware of the risk of electrocution](#). Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water. If it is safe to do so, turn off the electricity to prevent electric shock.



Stay Safe from Post-Storm Hazards

- [Put your health and safety first](#): Be careful in areas with storm damage or flooding. If you evacuated, return only when officials say it is safe to do so. Areas without power may experience heat advisories, which can lead to illness or a threat to life.
- Be aware of heat-related illnesses. Areas without power may experience heat advisories, which can lead to illness or a threat to life. Learn to recognize the signs of heat illness.
- [Be careful when cleaning up](#). Wear protective clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, work gloves and sturdy thick-soled shoes. Do not try to remove heavy debris by yourself. Use an appropriate mask if cleaning mold or other debris. People with asthma and other lung conditions and/or immune suppression should not enter buildings with indoor water leaks or mold growth that can be seen or smelled. Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work.
- Avoid downed power or utility lines. They may be live with deadly voltage. Stay far away and report them immediately to your power company.
- [Power outages](#) can impact the safety of food in your refrigerator and freezer. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to keep your food as fresh as possible. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours. Use coolers with ice if necessary.
- Check on friends and family: If you are able, please check on your neighbors, friends, and family because some may need more help than others.

FEMA previously issued [Ensuring Civil Rights in Multiple Disasters During COVID-19](#) to offer best practices for partners and communities facing a disproportionate rate of COVID-19 illness and death during response and recovery efforts during multiple disasters.

Additional post-storm safety tips can be found on [Ready.gov](#) and [Listo.gov](#), as well as by downloading the [FEMA App](#). For more information on federal Hurricane Ida preparedness and response visit [Hurricane Ida | FEMA.gov](#).

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters. FEMA Region 3's jurisdiction includes Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

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